

# POLICE!! WHERE WILL THE WOMEN FASHIONS END?

**Ankle Watch Succeeds the Roll-down Stocking and the Country Is Gasping—Saving Grace Is That While Skirts Are Shorter Shoes Are Higher—Jeweler In New York Starts Fad In Order to Dispose Of Surplus Ladies Watch Stock**



Why is an ankle watch and why do women wear their stockings rolled down to their shoe tops, displaying bare legs? This is a question that has arisen since the two novelties originated in New York. What will this winter or next summer bring forth in undress styles?

The crazy extreme displays apparently originated abroad, were brought here by actresses and overnight developed into a fad.

Mayors of other cities say that they can hardly imagine that the follies will be of any great endurance, and class them with the wrist watch and sport shirt. It is something based on the desire of certain persons to attract undue publicity to themselves.

These fads have no more reason for existence than a mosquito or a housefly, say the Mayors of Chicago, Kansas City and St. Louis.

It's just here because they're here. The eyes of New Yorkers are downcast as if some great tragedy had struck this center of fashion, foibles and folly. But New York is not downcast, neither does it mourn, but the busy denizens of the metropolis have been gathering fleeting glimpses of ankle watches and rolled-down socks. What will come next?

Yes, the ankle watch and the custom of young ladies walking about with their stockings rolled down to their shoe tops, displaying bare legs, are the latest fashions or rather follies of New York and hence the eyes of all are turned to the sidewalk. The ankle watch for winter has succeeded the summer stocking stunt.

In years ago our ancestors, in the fields or in the forest, gazed at the sky and from the position of the sun were able to tell the time. Now the New Yorker glances in the opposite direction and tells the time.

The new ankle watch is a sort of a second cousin to the wrist watch, and the reason for carrying a watch about the ankle is about the same as for strapping one to the wrist. That is there is no reason for it outside of a desire of the wearer to attract attention.

When the first woman appeared with the first ankle watch New York just craned its neck a little more than usual and said nothing. It takes something more than an ankle watch to shock little old New York.

## SHOCKED THE PROVINCES.

But when an actress traveled west with the latest foible of the east she caused a thrill. It wasn't so much the watch that caused crowds in Chicago, St. Louis and Kansas City to gasp and then peek again, it was the fact that to properly display the ankle watch the dress must be worn very short, extending just a few inches below the knee and displaying something more than a mere time-piece. So St. Louis, Chicago and Kansas City and other places stood about and gasped and wondered.

Why, oh, why, should a woman wear a watch on her ankle, they asked. Manifestly it could be in a more convenient place if she wore it on top of her hat. Imagine a woman when she wants to know the time or wants to communicate it to others, having to stop at some convenient place, lift her skirt a trifle, bend over and consult the hour and minute hands. Isn't it convenient?

Imagine, also, two women stopping to get the correct time from each other and having to repeat the above performance. Then one can recognize why St. Louis, Kansas City and Chicago were shocked when they gained their first glimpse of the ankle watch.

"What's it for?" asked Mayor Kiel of St. Louis when told of the ankle watch. "I thought people had reached the limit when they donned sport shirts and wore wrist watches, but an ankle watch is beyond my understanding. I have always worn my watch in my vest pocket or told time by the city hall clock, and I guess I'll still do it instead of chasing up and down the streets looking for ankle watches. I hope they don't bring that style to little old St. Louis. It may be all right for New York—anything goes there, but St. Louis women are a little more dignified than to accept every foolish fad that New York may introduce. If women want to know the time let them wear breast watches, ask the druggist or look at the city hall clock."

## CHICAGO

### MAYOR'S VIEW.

Mayor Thompson, of Chicago, similarly expressed himself on the question of the ankle watch and included the rolled-down stocking. "New York is the greatest little press agent for her own self in the country. For fear that people of the west may forget that Gotham rules the world of fashions, New York al-

ways is thinking up something foolish," he said.

"As far as I am concerned, a woman may wear her watch on her garter or any other place, but I don't believe she should make the position of her watch an excuse for showing her legs, and I consider the ankle watch nothing more nor less than an excuse for such a display."

"It seems to me that skirts are getting shorter each year. Perhaps they have gotten so short that no one dares to clip off another inch of material so some ingenious person that wants to appear eccentric finds that by wearing an ankle watch she can further controvert convention."

"As far as girls wearing their stockings rolled down, that is the limit. It seems to me it should be a matter for the police."

Mayor Jost of Kansas City opines that the ankle watch and the rolled-down stocking never will be much of a success in the city on the Kaw.

"Just say for me that Kansas City never will take up any such foolish fads. Everyone here wears garters and if you see anyone with their socks hanging down you can bet it is an accident and not a new fad. An ankle watch is too funny even to think of. Why an ankle watch?

A woman might as well pin her watch on her back and then have to stand in front of a mirror every time she wants to tell the time as to place it about her ankle.

## IT'S JUST TOO FUNNY.

"This city has been very lucky in keeping away from New York foolishness. I have been around a good deal, but never have I seen anyone wearing an ankle watch. Of course, there are sport shirts. You can't prevent them. They look sort of foolish, but if men want to wear them they can do so without much harm."

"But when you see Kansas City women wearing ankle watches and going around with their socks down I am going to move."

In New York itself reporters have succeeded in tracing the ankle watch to its lair and asking the inventor, a Fifth avenue jeweler that important question: But why an ankle watch?

"Why an ankle watch?" replied the jeweler. "That's the question it's just like, 'Who's looney now,' or 'Who slugged Billy Patterson?' There's no reasonable answer. As for me, necessity was the mother of invention. I wanted to

sell some watches I had in stock. Trade had been dull in the ladies' watch line and I wanted to reduce my stock. I knew that if I could start a fad I could sell my watches. Women are pretty close imitators of each other when it comes to fashions or fads. I knew if I could get some novelty that would create a sensation and win newspaper publicity I would have great sales."

"So I took my neatest watches and arranged them with ribbons, leather and gold straps so that they might be strapped about the ankle. Then I offered one to an actress if she would promise to wear it on the street. She did and you know the result."

## AND THE WOMEN FOLLOW.

"How silly," the women remarked to themselves, but next day I sold 50 ankle watches and after that an average of from 100 to 200 a day and it seems that every woman in New York with a pretty ankle has purchased one of the watches."

As for the custom of wearing the socks rolled down no one has traced it to its origin.

It was first introduced here by several actresses returning from abroad. As they walked down the

gang plank it was noticed that their socks were down. A second glance at the carefully rolled silken hose convinced on-lookers that the women had not lost their garters and were unconsciously parading with bare legs shown, but were very well aware and pleased with the publicity they were obtaining.

Then arrived the ship news reporters and from the actresses learned the inside secrets of the styles in Europe. Not only were women to appear in such shocking stockings, but dresses were to be higher. To compensate for this change in skirts, shoes also were to be higher and about the tops of the shoes were to be fastened the ankle watches, the actresses confided to the reporters and the reporters gave the news to the city and the news services gave it to the entire country over the wire.

In a few days a number of girls appeared unblushingly in public with their socks neatly rolled and bare legs showing. Admiring crowds followed in their wake and New York was extremely downcast that day as far as its gaze were concerned.

So verily New York is downcast in vision.



MISS CHERRY MARSTON AND HER ANKLE WATCH

